



**PRINCIPAL'S LETTER**

**The Opening Mass 2014**

Thank you to Mr Jonathan Moyle, Mr Benjamin Bowman, Reverend Deacon Vince Barclay, Mr George Nulley, Mrs Kim Maloney, Mrs Bronwyn McKenzie, Mrs Sharyn Quirk, the Maintenance Staff, and everybody else involved in the leadership of the Opening School Mass on 21 February.

The Mass was the first occasion for His Grace the Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn to visit the College since his Instalment last year. Archbishop Christopher's Homily brought an energy and a clarity to the opportunities that St Mary of the Cross MacKillop offers us in strengthening our relationship with Jesus. It is rare indeed to have a Homily at a school Mass so widely discussed and commented upon. Thank you also to Fr Peter and Fr Lachlan for their important contribution in concelebrating the Mass.

As is now always the case, the students of the College deserve high commendation for their reverent behaviour and sincerity during what was nearly a two-hour event. The celebration of Eucharist in such a huge community setting was enhanced by the dignity and maturity that the College brought to the Mass.

**The Lenten Season**

Ash Wednesday marked the beginning of the Season of Lent, which calls us to reflect on our Lord's time in the wilderness. At the campus liturgies, our students were encouraged to reflect on their faith, the challenges of materialism and comfort, the needs of others, and the power of shared and self sacrifice.

I hope the next five weeks are valuable times of reflection and growth for myself, the staff, students, and families who belong to the Christian tradition and our school.

**Au revior St Joseph's, Merci MacKillop!**

The visit from St Joseph's College, Le Havre, in Northern France, was an event rich in excitement and opportunity. Their participation in our classes, in the homes of many of our families, and at our Mass, helped to build a warm and firm friendship between our two school communities. The students of St Joseph's represented the best of French youth and Catholic education of that country, and the MacKillop families who hosted them reflected the generosity and hospitality that is a feature of our community and this city.

Yours in St Mary MacKillop,

MICHAEL LEE  
PRINCIPAL



**PRINCIPAL'S PRAYER**

Prayer plus good deeds plus forgiveness equals Jesus.

- Archbishop Christopher Prowse

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- MAR MONDAY 10** • Canberra Day Public Holiday • Catholic Schools Week
- MAR WEDNESDAY 12** • Swimming Carnival
- MAR WEDNESDAY 26** • Community Day (Year 7)
- MAR THURSDAY 27** • Year 8 Sydney Trip (Group 1)

# COLLEGE NEWS

## NEWS+INFORMATION

### School Fees

Term 1 Fees are due to be paid by this Friday 7 March 2014 unless paying by Direct Debit or other approved method. If you would like more information regarding Direct Debit payments or have any queries regarding your fees, please contact the Fees Office.

*Michelle Predovan, Fees Manager*

### How to be an outstanding orator

Attention all Year 10, 11 & 12 Students: Do you dread oral presentations? Do you feel anxious at the thought of speaking in front of a class? If you do, then you are invited to attend tutorials to help you become an outstanding orator! Tutorials will take place on Wednesday 12 March and Wednesday 19 March from 3.30 to 4.30pm in B1. For more details contact Ms Lortan in the English staffroom.



### Student Achievement

**Kira Guilfoyle (Year 9, pictured)** won two first place 'blue' ribbons in craft at the 2014 Royal Canberra Show. Last year, Mr Akhtar taught his mathematics class how to make a flexagon (modular flexible origami). Kira took this knowledge home and practised the technique before entering the 'origami paper craft' competition, which she won. Kira's interest in Japanese led her to also enter an exhibit of a 'Kumihimo' (a Japanese braided necklace) into the 'other textiles' division. Kira not only won first place, but she was awarded the title of 'Student Champion'.

**Mikayla Rose (Year 8)** participated in the ACT BMX championships last weekend. In the U14 girls she won for the fifth year running and in Pro Ladies she finished 2nd.

# CURRICULUM CORNER: I-HUM

For the 2014 school year, each newsletter will feature a report from a different faculty/learning area. This report might feature learning tips, news, or upcoming events. Today's report comes to you from Integrated Humanities.

## INTEGRATED HUMANITIES

### The year so far in I-HUM!

Enthusiastic, engaging, Creative, inspiring, and resourceful are a few of the many words that could be used to describe the start Year 7 I-HUM has had to 2014. The energy and positive vibe coming from all the classrooms is evident in the vibrant and interactive displays evolving around the school.

The focus for this term is Faith and Courage; Students have been exploring this theme through the actions of St Mary MacKillop and the life stories of other great people. This has been the basis of the students' focus in developing their own life narratives with an emphasis on achievable goals and inspirational people in their lives.



### Coming up in I-HUM

Inquiry questions have been used as a tool to investigate a variety of primary sources and historical evidence presented to I-HUM classes. The students will be given the opportunity to put their newly found developing skills into action.

In Weeks 7 and 8 of this term (21 and 28 March) I-HUM will be attending an excursion to the National Museum. During this time students will engage in a 'Living Cultures' workshop whereby they will interact with a variety of indigenous primary sources and use inquiry questions to solve issues presented to them. Students will also attend the 'Old Masters' Exhibition, completing related activities from the Arts program.

RAGE - (Reading And Getting Enjoyment) has been a positive hub in all IHUM classes.

*Kathleen Galvin  
Integrated Humanities Coordinator*

# CURRICULUM NEWS

## SENIOR STUDIES



With both Year 11 and 12 having now completed practice AST exams and having personally just attended a workshop held by ACER (the group responsible for creating the AST examinations) I thought it would be timely to give you some general exam hints and tips:

1. Read the question carefully and answer it directly: This needs to always be your priority in exams. It's easy to stray from the original point of the question so keeping this piece of advice at the front of your mind may help you focus your argument or response.
2. Read the question with intent: By this I mean, get information from your first reading. Having to read it multiple times only wastes time, so underline, highlight, and make notes as you read a question...you will be better prepared for whatever is asked of you by the end of your reading.
3. Manage your time wisely: If one question is worth five marks and another worth one, then it follows you are likely to need to spend five times as much time on the first. Keep in mind what a question is worth to determine how much time to allocate to it.
4. Use all your available time: While it might seem obvious, quite often students sit in their exam doing nothing. What can possibly be gained by doing this? You're not permitted to leave, you can't do anything else so why not dedicate every moment on what's in front of you. Even if it only gains you one or two marks it's surely a better use of your time.

Of course there is much more you could consider but this will at least give you a better chance to demonstrate everything you know in the short time you have in an exam.

As always, if you have any queries, please don't hesitate to contact me.

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*Colby Cruwys,  
Senior Studies Coordinator*

## NAPLAN

In 2014 the National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing for Years 7 and 9 will be held from 13-15 May (Week 13).

The data obtained from NAPLAN is used by our school to enrich teaching and learning for the benefit of all students in our community. The more students we have participating in the NAPLAN testing the greater the benefit for our College when implementing the available data into our teaching and learning programs.

If your son or daughter has special needs, or requires special provisions during their classroom learning, these will be provided during the NAPLAN testing. If you have any concerns regarding the support provided, please contact the Coordinator for Inclusive Education, Lenore Moore or the College NAPLAN Coordinators (Maria O'Donnell or Clare Fletcher).

If you wish to withdraw your son or daughter from all or some aspects of the NAPLAN testing you may do so. All

withdrawals require a signed Parent/Carer Choice to Withdraw form. These forms are available from the NAPLAN Coordinators. The ACT Department of Education and Training has requested that these forms be completed and returned to the College NAPLAN Coordinators.

NAPLAN Testing dates for 2014 are:  
Tuesday 13 May: Language/Writing  
Wednesday 14 May: Reading  
Thursday 15 May: Numeracy (calculator and non calculator)

An information brochure is available at [http://www.nap.edu.au/verve/\\_resources/NAPLAN\\_2014\\_Information\\_for\\_parents\\_brochure\\_web.pdf](http://www.nap.edu.au/verve/_resources/NAPLAN_2014_Information_for_parents_brochure_web.pdf). This brochure contains information regarding the NAPLAN testing and procedures. Further general information about NAPLAN is available at <http://www.nap.edu.au/>.

If you have questions, please contact Maria O'Donnell or Clare Fletcher via email ([maria.odonnell@mackillop.act.edu.au](mailto:maria.odonnell@mackillop.act.edu.au) or [clare.fletcher@mackillop.act.edu.au](mailto:clare.fletcher@mackillop.act.edu.au)) or call 62095298 (Wanniassa) or 62090140 (Isabella).

*Clare Fletcher and Maria O'Donnell  
Teaching and Learning Coordinators*

## ACADEMIC NOTICES

### Application for Special Provisions

All students in Years 10, 11 and 12 who have additional learning needs are asked to complete the form found on Studywiz: Application for Special Provision as soon as possible. This form can also be found in The Inclusive Education Office at the side of the Isabella IRC or from any Year Coordinator. Students with medical issues, diagnosed learning needs eg dyslexia, dyspraxia, auditory processing disorder can apply for options such as additional time, coloured paper, or rest breaks in exams. If you require further information please speak with a Year Coordinator or a member of the Inclusive Education team.

*Lenore Moore*

### Year 7-10 Granting of Extensions

When a student is not able to meet an assessment deadline for a valid reason (for example illness, or other extenuating circumstances) they are able to make an application for an extension.

The process for obtaining an extension is:  
1. Students must download the 'Application for Extensions' form available on Studywiz. They must complete the form in full, providing supporting documentation (e.g. a medical certificate).

2. This completed form must be presented to the Faculty Coordinator at least three days prior to the due date of the task. Evidence of work in progress may be required to support the request for an extension.

3. The Faculty Coordinator will determine whether an extension is granted and will mark the form accordingly. A new

assessment due date will be recorded on the form. If an extension is not granted the work is to be submitted on the due date, even if it is incomplete.

4. The extension form must be submitted (on the rescheduled date) with the assessment task.

Please note: Breakdown or malfunction of computer equipment is not usually seen as a valid excuse for exemption from penalty. Students should store their work on the Student H Drive so that it is backed up by the College Network. It is the student's responsibility to ensure they keep a hard or electronic copy of the task. Students are able to use the facilities of the IRC to print assessment ready for submission.

*Clare Fletcher and Maria O'Donnell  
Teaching and Learning Coordinators*

# PASTORAL NEWS: WANNIASSA

## Lent Fundraising - Project Compassion

Project Compassion, the College's Term 1 fundraising focus for Caritas was launched this week on Ash Wednesday. During the 40 days of Lent in the lead up to the celebration of the resurrection at Easter, students are encouraged to make some personal sacrifices and donate money to those less fortunate than themselves through the Project Compassion appeal.

Throughout this year, the SRC will be driving fundraising efforts for all of the College charities. A House based approach will be taken this year with the SRC keeping an ongoing tally for each of our 4 Houses based on the total funds raised for the year across all charities.

Through this friendly inter-house competition, it is anticipated that both House identity amongst students and the overall contributions to the College charities will increase.

## The Cross Campus Interaction Program



Over 50 Year 12 students have this year volunteered to give up a study period each cycle to work with students on the Wanniasa Campus. The main objective of the Year 12 Cross Campus Interaction Program is for Year 12 students to have a presence on the Wanniasa Campus. They will attend a particular Year 7, 8 or 9 class and be involved in assisting students and teachers with classroom activities and interacting with the younger students developing positive relationships.

## Parentingideas

Congratulations to the following students who have this week been presented Bronze Status Awards at the Wanniasa Campus Assembly: Callum Wardell (7A2), Maddyson Watson (7A1), Sophee Watson (8A3).

## Year 9 Building Bridges

During their Pastoral Program lesson on February 26, Year 9 students viewed a presentation called Building Bridges. The one-man-show used song, performance and storytelling to explore the themes of relationship, responsibility and choice in contemporary Australian culture.

The first part focused on respect for self and respect for others. What we bring to and take from a relationship; how our behaviour impacts on others and what tools we need to build healthy and positive relationships. It also touched on the impact of modern technology and social-networking.

The second section explored alienation, empathy and forgiveness.

The presentation evoked insightful discussion from Year 9 students and imparted some powerful messages.

## Motivational Media

On Thursday 20 March, all students in Years 7 - 9 will view the Motivational Media Presentation "Impact". Impact is a three-screen show using the latest sound system and projection technology. It features the latest movies and music, as well as interviews with five young Australians. The presentation challenges and inspires students, bringing stories of incredible triumph along with stories of adversity. Impact asks "what difference are you going to make on the world".

"Impact" is a presentation that contains powerful images and messages about the value of planning for our lives and making good choices in relationships with others. The songs, stories and comments in the presentation focus on the influence that we as individuals have on those around us

The focus of the presentation is that from the moment we take our first breath we are bombarded with sights, sounds, emotions and actions which will shape who we are to become. The impact of some events may leave us fearful and hurt. Others may challenge us and even empower us to do great things. We in turn can impact on the decisions and directions of those we come in contact with. Understanding the power of such impacts should make us consider carefully what actions we take.

As the presentation states - We are always making an impact; good or bad! It's up to us to choose.

## Parentingideas

This fortnight's parentingideas article "true grit helps kids succeed" discusses the influence of character on a young person's life and how parents can assist in the development of it.

*Lachlan McNicol, AP Pastoral Care (Wanniasa)*

## COMMUNITY NEWS

### Tuggeranong Vikings Basketball

Vikings welcomes ALL players (current and new, unless from another club) to register at <http://tuggeranongvikings.basketball.net.au/>, especially for U10 and U12 age groups. For further information, contact Denise at [stephenr@grapevine.com.au](mailto:stephenr@grapevine.com.au).

### Book Launch

The launch of Maree Sirosis' book, Commanding the Home Front, takes place on 5 April at the Duntroon Community Centre between 3-5pm. The book focuses on families who support the modern-day Australian Defence Force. RSVP to the launch by 2 April: 0414 263 013.

### Scouts

Scouts ACT would like to invite you to a free three-week trial of scouting. For more information, call 1800 SCOUTS or visit [www.scoutsact.com.au](http://www.scoutsact.com.au).

### Eddies Community Fair

This Fair takes place on Saturday 22 March, 3-7 pm, McMillan Cres Griffith. Features Auction, Band, Fashion, Sausages, Slushies, Art, Raiders, Magician, Rugby, Choir, Jumping Castles, Merry-Go-Round, Fun Factory, Books, Rocket Ship, Octopus, Cars, Gourmet Food, Fairy Floss, Preloved Stuff, Coffee, Lollies, Sports Gear, Plants, Cakes, Dancers, Shockwave, Rocket Ship.



## True GRIT helps kids succeed

*Developing character strengths is just as important to your child's future success as building academic skills.*

*'Talent or persistence. Which would you choose for your child?'*

I often ask this question at my parenting seminars and the responses are fascinating. Parents naturally want both. Sorry, but that's not an option.

When pushed most parents choose talent over persistence, which in many ways reflects the current thinking around achievement. However, intelligence, sporting prowess and ability in whatever it is we value will only get a child or young person so far. Talent is purely potential. They need more than this to achieve sustained excellence in anything they do. It is the character traits of hard work and the ability to stick at a task and see it through that make all the difference.

Malcolm Gladwell, in his book *Outliers*, describes twenty-something American student Renee, who took 22 minutes to work out a complicated math question. The average student gives up after THREE minutes, preferring to ask for help than work through the problem.

Renee was unusual in persisting for so long until she got the solution. The funny thing is, she doesn't describe herself as a good math student, yet she is highly successful at maths. **Grit** rather than pure math talent is her forte.

### Character matters

Cognitive (thinking and reasoning) skills by themselves aren't enough for children to succeed over the long journey. Many recent studies (most notably the work of US-based Angela Duckworth) have found that character, not cognitive ability, is the single most reliable determinant of how a person's life will turn out. The traits associated with success include the inclination to persist at a boring task (grit), the ability to delay gratification (self-control)



and the tendency to follow through with a plan (conscientiousness). These are invaluable traits at school, in the workplace and in life in general.

Character works as an indicator of success when it's seen as set of strengths and personality traits rather than personal values such as loyalty, tolerance or forgiveness.

### Character is forged under difficulty

The key character traits of grit, self-control and conscientiousness are forged under hardship and duress. This makes our current propensity to over protect and over indulge kids problematic. When kids continually experience easy success we set them up for failure because when they finally face up to difficult situations many lack the capacity to push through the tough times.

Encouraging kids to step out of their comfort zones and take learning and social risks is one of the great challenges for modern parents. It's critical that we challenge children and young people to attempt activities where failure is a real option. Overcoming setbacks and pushing through difficulties is how character is formed.



### Character is malleable

The good news is that character, like intelligence, is malleable. It's not fixed. It's important to establish in your own mind as a parent, and also in your children's minds, that character traits such as grit, self-control and conscientiousness can be developed.

To this end it's important that parents steer clear of using absolute language to label behaviour and express views that traits and abilities are fixed. Comments such as 'You're no good at math' become a rule that young people learn to live by, and become default thinking that's hard to budge.

### Make grit part of a family's brand

In my book *Thriving!* I wrote about how every family has its own distinctive brand, which is a reflection of the strengths and traits that all members share.

For instance, if high work ethic is a common trait then it's a fair bet that hard work is something parents focus on in their family.

Parents can actively promote grit and persistence in kids by making character part of their family's brand. They can focus on character in conversations. They can share experiences where character paid off for them in their lives. They can discuss how character contributes to excellence and success in everyday life including at work, at school and in the sporting field. Character and its many components can become part the family narrative regardless of the age of the children.

### Build proprietary language around character

Families develop their own language around what's important to them and that needs to include the language of character if parents want to foster excellence.

Continuous messaging of terms and phrases such as 'hang tough' and 'hard yakka' help weave character traits into the family DNA.

Parents should reflect on the language and terms they already use and build key phrases and terms around the following key character strengths: grit, self-control, conscientiousness, enthusiasm, social intelligence, gratitude, optimism, and curiosity.

### Character becomes the default mechanism

Habit and character go hand in hand. Conscientious young people don't go around consciously deciding that they've got to delay the fun stuff until they've done their work. They've just made it their default mechanism to stick at their task, or delay gratification or jump into a task with enthusiasm.

Conscientiousness doesn't always serve a young person well. They can sometimes place full focus on menial or unimportant tasks when a smarter option may be to cruise and save energy for the important times such as exams. That's where parental guidance plays a part. However, in the long run conscientiousness serves a young person well when it's their default because when the stakes are high and they really need to work hard, they will automatically make the right choice. In fact, it will be the only option they see when excellence really matters.

*Parentingideas just got better! Parentingideas Club has just been launched and has all the answers you need. There are 100's of articles, videos, guides, how to's, book reviews and more available for members. Become a member today at [parentingideasclub.com.au](http://parentingideasclub.com.au).*